

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VICTOR 00230 01 OF 02 151051Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 COME-00 IO-13  
AID-05 /110 W

-----116882 151113Z /10

R 150620Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 785

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 VICTORIA 0230/1

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PLOS, PBOR, ECON, SE

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT RENE ATTACKS POLITICAL OPPONENTS AND  
DEFENDS GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND "SOCIALIST PATH" IN PRESS  
CONFERENCE

SUMMARY: SEYCHELLES PRESIDENT F.A. RENE ON MAR 13 GAVE FIRST OF  
SCHEDULED MONTHLY PRESS CONFERENCES FOR LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL  
JOURNALISTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF FIVE RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC  
MISSIONS. AFTER ANNOUNCEMENT AT OUTSET THAT PURPOSES OF CONFERENCE  
WERE "TO ERADICATE MISUNDERSTANDINGS" AT HOME AND ABROAD  
ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN SEYCHELLES AND COMMUNICATE GOS VIEWS AND  
OBJECTIVES, RENE TOOK QUESTIONS FOR 90 MINUTES ON BROAD RANGE OF  
ISSUES. IN HIS RESPONSES TO REPORTERS' QUESTIONS, RENE SHARPLY  
ATTACKED RECENT EFFORT TO REVITALIZE POLITICAL PARTY OF DEPOSED  
PRESIDENT MANCHAM AND GAVE SIGNAL THAT NEW CONSITUTION WILL  
MOST LIKELY PROVIDE FOR ONE PARTY POLITICAL SYSTEM. HE PROCLAIMED  
HIS COMMITMENT TO ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT ALONG  
SOCIALIST LINES BUT REJECTED "RUMOR" THAT SEYCHELLES WOULD ADOPT  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VICTOR 00230 01 OF 02 151051Z

ANY FOREIGN MODEL. RENE ALSO DEFENDED POST-COUP CHANGES IN  
DOMESTIC POLICY WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THERE HAD BEEN A "BACKLASH".  
FOCUS OF CONFERENCE WAS ON INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MANY OF RENE'S MORE  
DOCTRINAIRE REMARKS MAY HAVE BEEN MADE WITH VIEW TOWARD BURNISHING  
HIS "REVOLUTIONARY" CREDENTIALS WITHIN LEFT-WING OF GOVERNMENT,  
WHICH WAS REPRESENTED AT PRESS CONFERENCE BY THREE MINISTERS.  
RENE DID NOT TOUCH ON ANY ISSUES RELATING TO U.S. INTERESTS IN

SEYCHELLES. END SUMMARY

1. DOMESTIC POLITICS-RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS ABOUT EFFORT LAUNCHED LAST MONTH TO REVITALIZE SEYCHELLES DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP) OF DEPOSED PRESIDENT MANCHAM (REFTELS A AND B REFER), RENE SAID THERE IS NO PLACE IN NEW SOCIALIST SOCIETY FOR "REMNANTS" OF "RIGHTIST, CAPITALIST" PARTY. HE GAVE GOVERNMENT VIEW THAT "SDP DOESN'T EXIST" AND SAID FEB 19 SDP MEETING ON ISLAND OF PRASLIN WAS ORGANIZED BY "A FEW FOOLS BEING PUSHED FORWARD BY OTHER PEOPLE" IN ORDER DESTABILIZE THE STATE. WHILE DUCKING A QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER GOS CONTEMPLATING FORMALLY DISSOLVING SDP, RENE IMPLIED THAT NO FURTHER SDP MEETINGS OR OTHER POLITICAL ACTIVITY WOULD BE PERMITTED. RENE REAFFIRMED PROMISE MADE AT TIME OF JUNE 5, 1977 COUP D'ETAT THAT ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD "IN JUNE 1979" BUT ADDED VIEWS OF "THE PEOPLE" EXPRESSED AT COMMUNITY MEETINGS ON NEW CONSTITUTION SHOWED POPULAR PREFERENCE FOR ONE PARTY SYSTEM. "THE PEOPLE ", HE REMARKED, HAD ALREADY DEMONSTRATED THAT THEY WANTED TO PUT AN END TO POLITICAL DISSENTION AND DIVISION WHICH HAD CHARACTERIZED SOCIETY UNDER "CAPITALIST SYSTEM". CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSION WHICH RENE SAID WILL BE COMPOSED OF THREE OR FOUR APOLITICAL SEYCHELLOIS AND BE CHAIRED BY "WELL KNOWN JUDGE FROM COMMONWEALTH COUNTRY" WOULD "TEST" PUBLIC OPINION ON THIS ISSUE LATER THIS YEAR BUT OFFERED PERSONAL VIEW THAT SEYCHELLES WILL BECOME ONE PARTY STATE. NEW CONSTITUTION WILL INCORPORATE WISHES OF "THE PEOPLE" BUT WOULD NOT BE SUBJECTED TO APPROVAL OR REJECTION IN A CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VICTOR 00230 01 OF 02 151051Z

REFERENDUM.

2. STATE SECURITY: RENE EXPRESSED GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN NINE MONTHS SINCE COUP AND ADDED THAT SINCE THERE WAS "NOTHING SUBSTANTIAL" TO CRITICIZE ABOUT GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE, HIS OPPONENTS CONCENTRATE ON "SMALL MISTAKES... IN EFFORT AT DESTABILIZATION... AND... CREATION OF FEAR". RENE NOTED THAT ANTI GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN WAS BEING ORCHESTRATED FROM ABROAD BY FORMER MINISTER (AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO DAVID JOUBERT NOW RESIDENT IN UK WHOM GOS CONSIDERES A PRINCIPAL EXTERNAL THREAT) AND ADDED GOS WAS LOOKING INTO WAYS OF DEALING WITH SITUATION. (COMMENT: THIS REMARK LENDS SOME SUBSTANCE TO SPECULATION WHICH SURFACED LAST WEEK THAT GOS IS PREPARING CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST JOUBERT AND WILL ATTEMPT SEEK HIS EXTRADITION FROM U.K.). IN TACIT CONFIRMATION OF RIVALRY WITHIN SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT, RENE SAID ARMY AND POLICE WERE "NOW" WORKING CLOSELY TOGETHER AND DEFENDED RECENT PARTICIPATION OF ARMY UNITS IN SECURITY OPERATIONS PARTLY ON GROUNDS SEYCHELLES POLICE FORCES ARE UNARMED.

3. SOCIALISM: RENE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY

NUMBER OF QUESTIONS TO REAFFIRM HIS COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT BASED ON SOCIALIST PRINCIPLES. HE SAID THAT WHILE ALL SOCIALIST STATES WERE FOUNDED ON SAME BASIC TENETS, "DIFFERENT ROADS" ARE AVAILABLE AND SEYCHELLES WOULD NOT BASE ITS SOCIALIST SYSTEM ON ANY FOREIGN MODEL. RENE SAID HIS OBJECTIVE IS TO CRATE STRUCTURES TO ENABLE PEOPLE TO DECIDE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FOR THEMSELVES AND THAT GOVERNMENT POLICY OF PROVIDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN EDUCATION IS ONE MEANS OF PROVIDING MACHINERY FOR ATTAINMENT OF GOAL OF DECISION MAKING AT LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL. HE URGED SEYCHELLOIS TO PURGE THEMSELVES OF THEIR "LOVE OF MONEY" AND ENGAGE IN SELF-CRITICISM AND SELF-ANALYSIS. HE STRESSED THAT REVOLUTION IS UNENDING AND THAT SINCE COUP GOS HAS BEEN DEALING WITH "BIG TASK OF RESTRUCTURING SOCIETY". IN RESPONDING TO QUERY FROM GOVERNMENT RADIO ANNOUNCER, RENE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 VICTOR 00230 01 OF 02 151051Z

GOVERNMENT POLICIES HAVE PRODUCED "BACKLASH" AND THAT IT HAD THEREFORE BEEN ESSENTIAL FOR HIM TO HAVE REMAINED IN SEYCHELLES DURING "PERIOD OF CONSOLIDATION". (NOTE: RENE IS EXPECTED TO MAKE FIRST POST-COUP OVERSEAS TRIP TO EUROPE THIS SUMMER.)

4. DOMESTIC ISSUES: RENE DEFENDED RECENTLY IMPOSED PRICE AND IMPORT CONTROLS ON VEGETABLES (WHICH HAVE ANGERED BOTH CONSUMERS AND FARMERS) EMPHASIZING THAT INCREASED PRODUCTION RATHER THAN PROFITS BASED ON ARTIFICIAL SCARCITY IS MAIN GOAL. HE SAID GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC POLICIES ARE BASED ON INCREASING

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VICTOR 00230 02 OF 02 151108Z  
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 AGRE-00  
COME-00 IO-13 AID-05 /110 W  
-----117099 151113Z /11

R 150620Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 786  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM  
AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 VICTORIA 0230/2

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION (LEADING TO SELF SUFFICIENCY IN BASIC FOODSTUFFS) AND DEVELOPMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES. FUTURE ROLE OF TOURISM INDUSTRY WOULD BE "TO PROVIDE SOME BUTTER FOR THE COUNTRY'S BREAD" (NOTE: FIRST TWO MONTHS OF 1978 HAVE PRODUCED RECORD SETTING PACE OF TOURIST ARRIVALS, UP 12 PER CENT OVER EXCELLENT FIGURES REGISTERED LAST YEAR.) RENE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PRIVATE OWNERSHIP-WHICH SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH CAPITALISM-HAS ROLE TO PLAY IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND REITERATED POLICY OF ENCOURAGING FOREIGN INVESTMENT. ON INVESTMENT, RENE ADDED THAT GOS CAREFULLY REVIEWS EACH PROPOSAL TO ENSURE THAT SEYCHELLES DERIVES MAXIMUM BENEFIT FROM EACH NEW VENTURE AND "EXPLOITATIVE" INVESTORS ARE BARRED. ON HEALTH SERVICES, RENE ANNOUNCED THAT UNDER NATIONAL PLAN NOW BEING DRAFTED, PRIVATE MEDICAL PRACTISE WOULD BE ABOLISHED AND UNIFORM CARE PROVIDED FOR ALL. ON ISSUE OF PRESS FREEDOM, RENE STRESSED THAT HE WELCOMED "CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM" BUT THAT IRRESPONSIBLE PRESS IN COUNTRY SUCH AS SEYCHELLES "COULD BECOME AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE".

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VICTOR 00230 02 OF 02 151108Z

5. EXTERNAL RELATIONS: IN BRIEF ANSWER TO QUESTION ON CONFLICT IN THE HORN, RENE CONDEMNED SOMALIA FOR INVASION OF ETHIOPIA AND RESTATED GOS POSITION ON INVIOABILITY OF NATIONAL BOUNDARIES. IN THIS REGARD, HE ADDED THAT SEYCHELLES HAD NO CLAIM ON MAURITIAN ISLAND OF AGALEGA DESPITE FACT THAT IT IS WITHIN A SEYCHELLES ISLAND GROUP. ON JURISDICTIONAL DISPUTE OVER SALHA DE MAYA , RENE SAID IT IS PART OF SINGLE RIDGE AND DEMARCATION LINE SHOULD BE DRAWN MIDWAY BETWEEN MOST NORTHERLY MAURITIAN ISLAND AND SOUTHERNMOST SEYCHELLOIS ISLAND. HE EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT SEYCHELLES, AS NEIGHBORING STATE, HAD NOT RECEIVED INVITATION TO MAURITIUS' COMMEMORATION OF TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE ADDING SARCASTICALLY THAT MARTITIAN ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES MAY HAVE FORCED REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF INVITED GUESTS.

6. COMMENT: RENE FIELDLED ALL QUESTIONS, INCLUDING MANY WHICH TOUCHED UPON LOCALLY SENSITIVE ISSUES IN FRANK AND FORTHCOMING MANNER. HE MAINTAINED HIS CUSTOMARY CONFIDENCE AND CONTROL- EVEN UNDER PERSISTENTLY ARGUMENTATIVE QUESTIONING BY WEST GERMAN JOURNALIST-THROUGHOUT LENGTHY SESSION. IMAGE OF RENE WHICH EMERGED FROM CONFERENCE WAS ONE OF FIRCEFULNESS AND DETERMINATION. HIS DISPARAGING REMARKS ABOUT SDP AND HIS APPARENT UNWILLINGNESS TOLERATE OPPOSITION PARTY COUPLED WITH HIS ESPOUSAL

OF SOCIALISM WILL GO DOWN WELL WITH LEFT WING OF HIS GOVERNMENT  
WHICH, UNLIKE RENE, IS BELIVED TO HAVE FAVORED STRONG ANTI-  
SDP STANCE AT OUTSET OF REVITALIZATION EFFORT. ON OTHER HAND,  
ABSENCE OF USUAL COMMENTS EMPHASIZING NATIONAL  
RECONCILIATION AND UNITY, RENE'S REMARKS ABOUT ONE PARTY STATE  
AND FREQUENT REFERENCES TO WISHES OF THE UNDEFINED "PEOPLE" HAVE  
HAD FURTHER UNSETTLING IMPACT ON MORE MODERATE SEYCHELLOIS  
ALREADY CONCERNED BY PACE AND DIRECTION OF POST-COUP  
SUBSTANTIVE AND STYALISTIC CHANGES.

MATTSON  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VICTOR 00230 02 OF 02 151108Z

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLICIES, SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT, PRESS CONFERENCES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 15 mar 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978VICTOR00230  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780114-1294  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** VICTORIA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780363/aaaacbkx.tel  
**Line Count:** 240  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** b7354bc6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 28 apr 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3317338  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESIDENT RENE ATTACKS POLITICAL OPPONENTS AND DEFENDS GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND "SOCIALIST PATH" IN PRESS CONFERENCE  
**TAGS:** PINT, PINS, PLOS, PBOR, ECON, SE, (RENE, FRANCE ALBERT)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/b7354bc6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014